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Letter dated 1 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on the situation of human rights in Guatemala issued on 26 April 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 116 (b).

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative

00-41686 (E) 100500 110500

Annex to the letter dated 1 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the situation of human rights in Guatemala issued on 26 April 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union remembers Bishop Gerardi with the greatest respect on this, the second anniversary of his brutal and appalling murder. The European Union welcomes President Portillo's decision to name this day henceforth "Day of Dignity for the Victims of Violence" and hopes it will become a day of special significance for all Guatemalans. It also welcomes the President's determination to ensure that those who are genuinely responsible for Bishop Gerardi's murder be brought to justice without further delay and expects that the Guatemalan Government will guarantee full independence and liberty to the authorities in their work of investigating this murder.

The European Union calls upon all Guatemalans to maintain the utmost respect for human rights and the rule of law and encourages the Guatemalan authorities, as already promised by the President in, *inter alia*, his inaugural speech, to make the recommendations of both the Truth Commission and the Recovery of Historic Memory reports into government policy. The European Union also calls upon all Guatemalans, and particularly their authorities, to make determined efforts to continue with the implementation of the peace accords in order to bring about a more just, stable and harmonious society.